



LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTION PARTNERSHIP

ADVANCING JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY SOLUTIONS

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Date: September 24th, 2019

Re: Michigan Clean Slate Legislation Package

Position: SUPPORT

To: The Michigan House Judiciary Committee

As an organization of police, prosecutors, and judges, we are writing in strong support of Michigan's Clean Slate legislation. The Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEAP) is a nonprofit group of criminal justice professionals who speak from firsthand experience within the criminal justice system about what we need to improve. Our mission is to make communities safer by focusing law enforcement resources on the greatest threats to public safety, addressing the root causes of crime, and working toward healing police-community relations.

Our combined decades working in the criminal justice system have taught us that public safety is not only about enforcing the law but also about building healthy communities. Officers interact every day with people who have made mistakes—mistakes that often led to a criminal record that followed them for the rest of their lives. People with a criminal record are haunted as they seek education, employment, and housing. The record holds them back as they attempt to make amends with their families and communities. It prevents them from seeking employment necessary to pay back restitution to victims. This is true even when people have turned their lives around and truly want to take the best path forward. The mark of a conviction should not be a life sentence.

New research from the University of Michigan shows the concrete benefits to public safety of expanding eligibility for “setting aside” a conviction. While 28 percent of Michiganders recidivate within three years, just 4.2 percent of Michiganders who have received a set-aside recidivate within five years.¹ Those who received expungements for violent offenses recidivate at just 0.6 percent.²

By preventing recidivism, we also begin to address the biggest concern of crime survivors, which is to make sure the person who hurt them doesn't hurt anyone else.³ So expungement is simultaneously making us safer, reducing crime, and addressing the needs of victims.

With Clean Slate, Michigan has the opportunity to lead the nation in public safety reform. It has the support of many current and former law enforcement professionals across Michigan and the United States.

Clean Slate is good public safety policy, and we urge its passage.

Sincerely,

Officer Steven Shank
Detroit Police Department

Jason Jakubowski
Former Police Officer
Big Rapids Department of Public Safety

Detective Sergeant Ted Nelson (Ret.)
Michigan State Police

Sergeant Steve Miller (Ret.)
Canton Township Police Department

1. Prescott, J.J. and Starr, S. Expungement of Criminal Convictions: An Empirical Study. Harvard Law Review. 2019. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3353620.
2. Prescott, J.J. and Starr, S. Expungement of Criminal Convictions: An Empirical Study. Harvard Law Review. 2019. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3353620.
3. "Crime Survivors Speak - Alliance for Safety and Justice." <https://allianceforsafetyandjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/documents/Crime%20Survivors%20Speak%20Report.pdf>. Accessed 18 Sep. 2019.